

RECOGNIZING THE ABILITYONE
PROGRAM

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, today I pay homage to an unsung hero among Federal programs. This initiative has found innovative ways to employ the blind and severely disabled persons among us. I am speaking, of course, of the AbilityOne Program, formerly known as the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, which in FY07 created over 40,000 quality jobs for Americans who were blind and/or severely disabled. Because of this program, blind and severely disabled people are able to gain skills and training that have helped them to find meaningful employment, which ultimately improved their quality of life.

Thanks to the AbilityOne program, blind and severely disabled people have more opportunities to more fully participate in society. Traditionally, people with these conditions are left with no other alternative but to rely heavily on Government programs such as SSI to support themselves. AbilityOne gives them more control over their own lives and destinies by allowing them to significantly reduce their dependence on Government resources. Recent studies have shown that the AbilityOne's employment program creates a positive net impact of \$46.75 million to Federal and State governments in both reduction of entitlements and increases of payments employees make through income and payroll taxes. Moreover, this program also helps them to enhance their self esteem by giving them alternative ways of defining themselves, their place, and their purpose in the world.

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin Inc. is able to provide sound employment opportunities and training for 935 blind and disabled people through the AbilityOne Program. National Industries for the Blind and NISH, along with local nonprofit organizations in Milwaukee, Wisconsin are creating new employment opportunities for people who are blind or disabled. These local programs right here in our community make possible the economic and personal enhancement of physically disadvantaged people.

I commend the efforts of AbilityOne and Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin Inc. in fighting to bring new opportunities and resources to those that are blind or severely disabled. The remarkable contributions that they have made to communities in and around Milwaukee are significant and worthy of recognition.

IN HONOR OF JEFF NORMAN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to the life and memory of a dear friend, Jeff Norman, who died last fall at the young age of 56. Jeff was a longtime resident of Big Sur in my central California Congressional District. He was many things in his short life: botanist, histo-

rian, author, activist, to name just a few. But to the many people whose lives Jeff touched, he will always be remembered as a friend, an inspiration, a pillar of support in times of need, and the possessor of a most acute acid wit that could add humor and common sense to the most tense and fractious meeting.

Jeff was born in Oakland, CA, and moved to Pebble Beach in 1962 with his parents, Don and Kathy Norman. He found his life's work as a naturalist at a very young age. While only 14, he discovered a fern unknown in Monterey County at Pico Blanco Boy Scout Camp. At 15, he was the youngest person hired as a lab technician at Hopkins' Marine Station. He graduated from Pacific Grove High School in 1969 and then attended UCSC.

Jeff's childhood experiences in the Big Sur area drew him back to the coast following college. He built a life for himself in this creative and fiercely independent community of the Big Sur coast. He lived in Palo Colorado and Bixby Canyons, and on the Post Ranch. In 1980, Jeff purchased his dream home, Alta Vista, a unique, handsplit redwood cabin that was built in the 1920s by the Overstroms, a homesteading couple. Jeff lived for 28 years in his beloved remote sanctuary three miles above the highway with no road access. It was a life that few still choose to live in modern America, but Jeff sought it out with both gusto and grace. Yet Jeff was very much connected to the world around him, especially the people, history, and environment of Big Sur. Indeed, his life's work was the preservation of both the natural and social fabrics of Big Sur.

Jeff's enthusiasm for gathering information, seeking answers, and solving puzzles was insatiable. He found equal joy in discovering a new species of clover or swapping wild tales with an old timer. As a consulting biologist he was fiercely protective of the unique ecology of the Big Sur region. Over the years he worked as a biologist for many different organizations, including the U.S. Forest Service, CA State Parks, UC Santa Cruz, the Big Sur Natural History Association, the Esalen Institute, and the Monterey County Planning and Building Department, among others. An active member of the California Native Plant Society, he was a consultant for the Big Sur Land Trust and the Monterey Pine Forest Watch.

As a social historian, Jeff was a friend and chronicler of the larger-than-life characters of Big Sur, including homesteader families such as the Posts, Harlans, Ewoldsens, Pfeiffers, and Trotters, artists and bohemians, intellectuals, conservationists, ranchers, and other folk. He was in his element when he was lecturing on local history and natural history at libraries, museums, Pacific Valley School and Big Sur Elderhostel or presenting talks on Robinson Jeffers for the Tor House Foundation. He was a charter member of the Big Sur Historical Society and past president and member of the Friends of the Big Sur Library. In 2004, Jeff co-authored *Images of America: Big Sur* with the Big Sur Historical Society, a book that traced the history of the coast from the days of the homesteaders with numerous never-before-seen photographs of the coast. He also co-authored *Big Sur Observed* with Kip Stewart in 1994, and was a major contributor to Donald Clark's *Monterey County Place Names* (1991). At the time of his death he was energetically at work on a new book about the bohemians of Big Sur.

Madam Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House in extending my condolences to

Jeff's family and friends. He will be greatly missed. He had mastered the art of a life well lived. So while we mourn his passing we are grateful for the spark of wonder and stewardship that he ignited in all of us.

RECOGNIZING THE UNI-CAPITOL
WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PRO-
GRAM

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program. Since the inception of the Uni-Capitol program, I have participated in this relationship building program that brings some of Australia's best and brightest future leaders to Washington. I have benefited greatly by the work of unique and talented individuals that produced top-notch work to both of my offices. In my personal office I have participated in the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program for the last nine years. This is the first year that I have also hosted an intern at the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in my capacity as Chairman.

I have been pleased to host two amazing young women, Siobhan Coughlan and Katrina Mae.

Siobhan Coughlan, who is in her third year at the University of Queensland, first arrived in the Helsinki Commission's office on January 3, 2008, and since then has provided able, thorough, and important assistance to the professional staff of the Commission. Over the past two months with the Commission, Siobhan has demonstrated her honorable personal character and integrity in the way she confronted the topic of human rights and democratic principles and the manner in which she interacted with staff on economic development and tolerance issues in a domestic and international context. Siobhan has served our organization in a number of capacities, and at each stage has proven to be valuable because of her professionalism, her drive to succeed, and her ability to work well within a group dynamic. Siobhan always demonstrated the highest level of conscience in keeping the respectability of our program as she sought to achieve our common goals. Siobhan brought her courteous and positive demeanor to hearings, briefings and events that the Commission held and events she attended on behalf of the staff here at the Commission. Much as been gained by having an international student at our side and Siobhan has greatly contributed her experiences, ideas, and thoughts that are shared by our good Australian friends across the water. I am delighted that she's able to extend her internship for another two months.

In her short time here, Katrina Mae has become an indispensable asset to my office. An undergraduate law student at the University of Wollongong, Katrina came to my office with an ardent interest in civil rights and a desire to work with individuals who support policies that encourage tolerance and cooperation across racial and cultural lines. Over the course of her two months, she has attended hearings and briefings on a myriad of policy issues,